Tiger population

338. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any latest census of the number of tigers in the country has been made;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the tiger population in the country is going down at an alarming rate, as reported in the "Hindustan Times" dated 15th June, 2002;

(d) whether Government have taken any steps to increase their population in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During 2001-02 all India tiger estimation has been conducted but so far only report from 11 States has been received. The estimated population of tigers in these States is given in the Statement. (See below).

(c) The Article dated 15-6-2002 in Hindustan Times mentions that the population of tigers in Rajasthan has been constant since 1997. State Government of Rajasthan has reported that according to 2001 -02 census, the population of tigers in Rajasthan is in the range of 57 to 70.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The steps taken by Government of India are as follows:

(i) Legal Protection has been provided to wild animals including tigers against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) Financial and technical help is being extended to the States under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure to provide effective protection to wild animals.

(iii) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

(iv) Ministry of Home Affairs has written to all State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(v) A Special Coordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Environment and Forests), Government of India for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(vi) In the recent meeting of Indian Board on Wildlife, it was resolved to declare the wildlife and forest as a priority sector and fill up all the vacant posts of the frontline staff immediately and also to provide basic infrastructure necessary for efficient discharge o> duties by them.

Statement

Population of tigers in the country as reported by the States

Sl. No.	Name of the States	2001-02.
1.	Andhra Pradesh	192
2.	Assam	354
3.	Chhattisgarh	227
4.	Maharashtra	238
5.	Mizoram	4
6.	Orissa	173
7.	Rajasthan	58
8.	Tamil Nadu	60
9.	Uttar Pradesh	284
10.	Uttaranchal	251
11.	West Bengal	349

NFAP in Gujarat

339. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the composition and objectives of the National Forestry Action Programme (NFAP);

(b) the land earmarked for implementation of the programme in Gujarat; and